Guide for Charter School Education Planning and Results Reporting

Requirements for Alberta charter school authority three-year education plans for 2006/07 – 2008/09 and annual education results reports, November 2006 and 2007

April 2006

Alberta
EDUCATION

Requirements for Alberta charter school authorities.

This document provides the requirements for:

- Three-year education plans for 2006-2009. These plans cover the 2006/07, 2007/08 and 2008/09 school years and are due on June 23, 2006.
- Annual education results report for the 2006/07 school year, based on the three-year education plans for 2006-2009. Reports are due November 30, 2007
- Annual education results reports for the 2006/07 school year, based on the three-year education plans for 2005-2008 submitted June 24, 2006. Reports are due on November 30, 2006.

For more information or for additional copies of this document, contact:

Sharon Campbell, Executive Director
Performance Measurement and Reporting
Alberta Education
9th floor, Commerce Place, 10155-102 Street
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 4L5

Phone: (780) 427-8217 (in Edmonton
310-0000 (Toll-free within Alberta)
Fax: (780) 422-5255
Email: measurement.learning@gov.ab.ca

Project Manager

Elaine Solez, Senior Manager
Performance Measurement and Reporting
Alberta Education

ISSN 1703-0218

Comments?

Send an email to: measurement.learning@gov.ab.ca

© Copyright © 2006 by the Crown in right of Alberta as represented by the Minister of Education.
Permission is given by the copyright owner for any person to reproduce this publication or any part thereof for educational purposes and on a non-profit basis.

106-07398/

Guide to Charter School Education Planning and Results Reporting, 2006-2009

Requirements for Alberta charter school authorities

Table of Contents

What's changed? ii

1. Background 1-1
   - Accountability Framework 1-1
   - Accountability Pillar of the Renewed Funding Framework 1-3
   - Development of the Accountability Pillar 1-3
   - Accountability Pillar Measures and Categories 1-4
   - Evaluation Methodology 1-5
2. Education Plans for Charter Schools 2-1
   - Preparing Education Plans 2-1
   - Updating Education Plans 2-1
   - Communicating Education Plans 2-2
   - Submitting Education Plans 2-2
   - Due Dates 2-2
   - Reviewing Education Plans 2-2
   - The Components and Requirements of Education Plans 2006-2009 2-3
3. Results Report 3-1
   - Preparing Results Reports 3-1
   - Reporting-Related Communications 3-2
   - Submitting Results Reports 3-2
   - Due Dates 3-2
   - Reviewing Annual Education Results Reports 3-2
   - The Components of an Annual Education Results Report for 2006/07 3-3

Appendices

A. Requirements and Sample Format for Charter School Plan 1
B. Revised Reporting Requirements for November 2006 AERR 9
C. Setting Targets for Performance Measures 13
D. Planning and Accountability Terms 17
E. References 19

What's changed?

	Page
Background	
• Reference to Section 78 of the *School Act*, which deals with reporting accountability information	1-1
• Information on the data reports provided to charter schools on the Accountability Pillar measures for charter schools	1-6 to 1-7
• Information on the timeline for implementing Accountability Pillar evaluations in charter schools	1-8
Charter School Plans and AERRs	
• Due date for 2006-2009 plans extended to June 30, 2006.	2-2
• Updated list of performance measures. Note:	2-6
– New order of outcomes and measures	
– measures formerly under development have been developed	
– multi-year results for these measures will be provided to charter schools in May 2006.	
Deletions	
• Information on performance measurement and on conducting surveys are no longer included as appendices in the document. These materials are posted as stand-alone documents on the Planning Resources page on Alberta Education's web site.	

Section

1

Background

REVISED

Section 16(2) of the Government Accountability Act requires organizations under the jurisdiction of government ministries to prepare business plans and annual reports for each fiscal year "in the form and at a time acceptable to the Minister." Section 78 of the *School Act* requires school authorities to use accountability information and report it to students, parents and the public in a manner the minister prescribes.

Charter schools have a unique purpose in Alberta's public education system, to provide different and innovative approaches for improving student learning, not only for the benefit of their own students, but also for use in other schools.

Charter school plans and reports align with and build on Alberta Education's vision, mission, goals and outcomes for the basic education system. In this way, they help ensure that the entire learning system is focused on key priorities that meet the educational needs of Alberta students. At the same time, charter school plans and reports incorporate local goals, priorities and outcomes that reflect the unique characteristics and circumstances of their communities. In short, they reflect local needs and priorities within the context of a province-wide framework.

Accountability Framework

REVISED

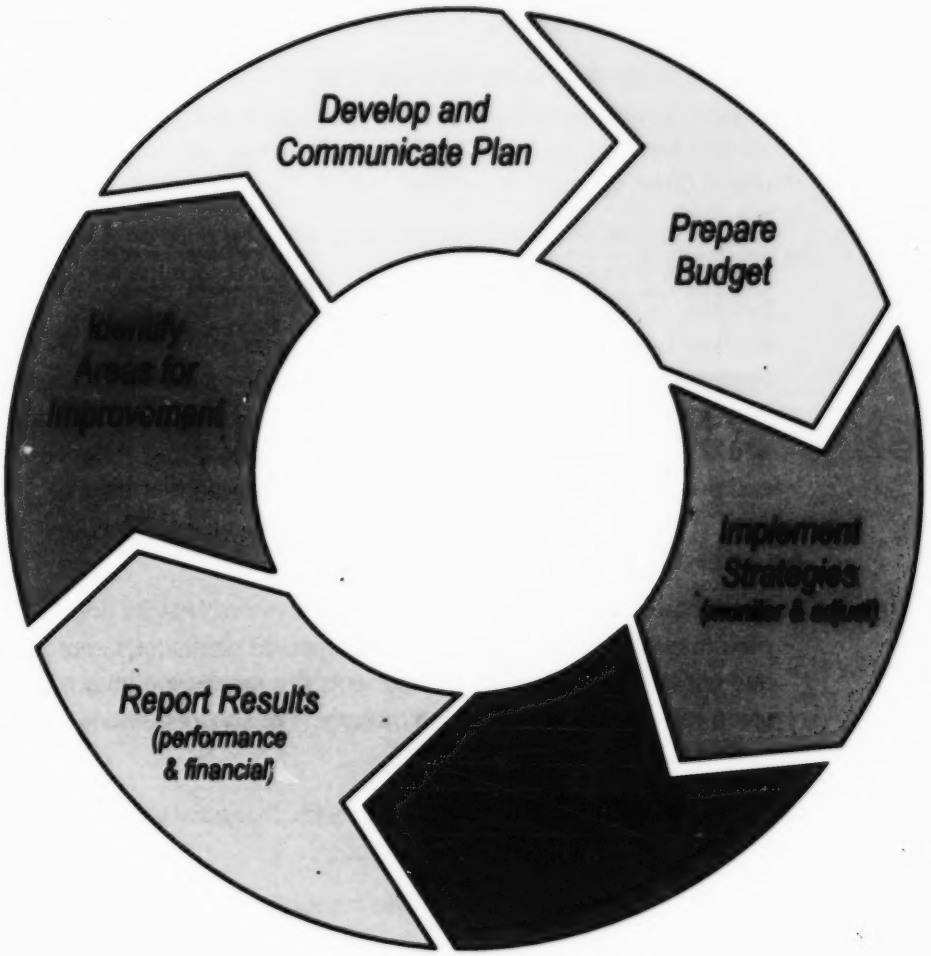
Accountability in the basic education system involves an ongoing performance management cycle that enables continuous improvement and critical reflection. Key components are measuring progress and using results to inform decision making. For school authorities, the cycle consists of:

- developing plans that are aligned with provincial goals and outcomes and incorporating community input;
- preparing budgets that allocate resources to achieve goals and improve results;

- implementing strategies to improve student learning, and monitoring and adjusting as needed;
- measuring, analyzing and reporting results;
- using results to identify areas for improvement for the next plan; and
- communicating with stakeholders (staff, students, parents or guardians, school councils, the public, and Alberta Education) about school authority plans and results.

REVISED

Performance Management Cycle for School Authority Accountability



- implementing strategies to improve student learning, and monitoring and adjusting as needed;
- measuring, analyzing and reporting results;
- using results to identify areas for improvement for the next plan; and
- communicating with stakeholders (staff, students, parents or guardians, school councils, the public, and Alberta Education) about school authority plans and results.

REVISED

Performance Management Cycle for School Authority Accountability

Accountability Pillar of the Renewed Funding Framework

Accountability for results was strengthened with the implementation of the Renewed Funding Framework, which is based on three pillars: Flexibility, Accountability and Funding, and has the following fundamental characteristics:

- equitable distribution of funds;
- provision of maximum flexibility to facilitate local decision making; and
- public accountability for the use of resources and the results achieved.

REVISED

The Accountability Pillar places increased emphasis on achieving outcomes, reporting results and using results for informed decision making for the purpose of improving programs and student results in subsequent years. Building on the existing accountability framework, processes and practices, charter schools continue to be accountable for meeting the learning needs of all students and ensuring that provincial legislation, regulations, policies, and standards are met. Charter school performance is measured, assessed and reported on a common set of measures. These measures are listed on page 2-6.

Development of the Accountability Pillar

NEW

Drawing on the work of the Funding Framework Review Committee and the Review Committee on Outcomes, the Accountability Pillar Design and Implementation Advisory Sub-Committee (APDIASC) has been working over two years on the development of the Accountability Pillar. The following organizations are represented on APDIASC: Alberta School Boards Association (ASBA), College of Alberta School Superintendents (CASS), Association of School Business Officials of Alberta (ASBOA), The Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA), Alberta Home & School Councils' Association (AHSCA), Fédération des conseils scolaires francophones de l'Alberta (FCSFA).

APDIASC established the following guiding principles for the Accountability Pillar:

- transparent process
- emphasis on achievement
- holistic approach to evaluation
- on-going collaborative processes
- all school authorities can succeed.

Accountability Pillar Measures and Categories

NEW

APDIASC grouped the 16 Accountability Pillar measures into the following seven categories that represent key aspects of education that are important to parents and the public:

- safe and caring schools
- student learning opportunities
- student learning achievement (Grades K-9)
- student learning achievement (Grades 10-12)
- preparation for lifelong learning, employment and citizenship
- parental involvement
- continuous improvement.

See page 2-6 for a list of Accountability Pillar measures by category.

During 2005/06 development was completed on the following Accountability Pillar measures for charter schools:

- annual dropout rates of students aged 14-18
- high school completion rate (based on tracking Grade 10 students for 3, 4 and 5 years)
- high school to post-secondary transition rates (based on tracking Grade 10 students for 4 and 6 years)
- diploma examination participation rate.

Alberta Education will provide multi-year results for these measures to charter schools starting in May 2006.

NEW

Evaluation Methodology

The evaluation methodology for the Accountability Pillar was developed and introduced to school jurisdictions in 2005/06. The application of the evaluation methodology to charter schools is under development for implementation in 2006/07. Accountability Pillar measure evaluations will be provided to charter schools in spring 2007 for use in the 2007-2010 three-year plans and updated in fall 2007 with the new year of achievement test and diploma exam results for use in the AERR in November 2007.

Section

2

Education Plans for Charter Schools

An Overview of the Process

Preparing Education Plans

The education plans prepared by charter schools encompass a three-year cycle, updated each year and aligned with Alberta Education's three-year plan. As one year is completed, another is added. At the same time, strategies and priorities are adjusted in response to the past year's performance results and changes in the operating environment. This approach allows charter schools to be responsive to students and community needs while focusing on continuous improvement and maintaining continuity from year to year.

The ultimate authority for a charter school's three-year education plan rests with the charter board. The charter board provides overall direction for the education plan. In consultation with parents, staff and other stakeholders in their community, the charter school administration develops a planning process that meets the charter school's needs and is responsible for preparing the content of the plan for approval by the charter board.

Updating Education Plans

Charter schools update their three-year education plans each year, taking the following considerations into account:

- prior years' results and targets for the previous three-year education plan
- input from stakeholders such as school councils, students, parents and the school community
- available resources
- Alberta Education's annual three-year business plan and performance results

- feedback from Alberta Education.

Although entirely new plans are prepared infrequently, components such as strategies and targets are updated each year, and components such as the vision, mission and beliefs (foundation statements) should be revisited and refreshed every few years. Such reviews are particularly appropriate when a charter board prepares for charter renewal.

Communicating Education Plans

Three-year education plans are public documents. Charter schools are required to post their plans on their websites, including subsequent amendments or updates. They are also required to use a variety of methods to communicate their plans and their achievements to the broader community. Appropriate tools may include newspaper inserts, brochures, charter school report cards and community meetings.

Submitting Education Plans

Charter schools submit their updated three-year plans to Alberta Education by sending an e-mail to the zone director. The e-mail message should advise that the plan has been posted to the charter school's website and provide the web-link to the plan. If plans are revised after submission, charter schools advise the zone director by e-mail of the changes and that the revised plan has been posted.

Due Dates

Three-year education plans for charter schools are due by May 31 of each year (extended to June 30, 2006 for the 2006-09 plan). They must be posted on the charter school's website by this date, and the department must be notified of this posting (i.e., by e-mail to the zone director).

Reviewing Education Plans

REVISED

Alberta Education staff review three-year education plans to:

- enhance the department's understanding of the charter school's context;
- identify ways the department can support charter school improvement efforts;
- monitor compliance with provincial requirements; and
- identify implications for provincial planning.

The Components and Requirements of Education Plans 2006-2009

[Components are required unless otherwise identified.]

Education plans for 2006/07 – 2008/09 include the following components:

- A **message** from the board chair (optional).
- An **accountability statement**, worded as follows:
  The Education Plan for (charter school) the three years commencing September 1, (year) was prepared under the direction of the Charter Board in accordance with the responsibilities specified in the *School Act*, the *Government Accountability Act*, Alberta Education Policy 2.1.1 ("Accountability in Education: School Authority Accountability") and the provincial government's accounting policies. This Education Plan was developed in the context of the provincial government's business and fiscal plans. The Charter Board is committed to achieving the results laid out in this plan.
- Information on how the plan was or will be communicated to parents and the public. Also include a link to the plan posted on the charter school's website.
- **Foundation statements** (i.e., vision and mission – required and using the same wording approved by the Minister; principles and beliefs – optional) that articulate the charter school's values and purpose. These are consistent with the corresponding statements in Alberta Education's business plan.
  - **vision:** describes a possible and desired future state that the charter school strives to achieve; it focuses on student achievement and programs or services that maximize student learning
  - **mission:** provides a clear, concise description of the charter school's purpose and role
  - **principles and beliefs:** provide statements of the principles and beliefs that guide the charter school's decision-making.
- A **profile of the charter school** (optional). Profiles include information about the charter school, such as:
  - characteristics of the community and students
  - education programs

- sites (size, location and other details)
- planning environment, including emerging trends and issues that affect operations.

- **Charter goals consistent with the charter approved by the Minister and provincial goals, related outcomes, performance measures and targets, as follows:**

REVISED

- For each charter goal, include at least one outcome and related measure(s) and strategies that address learning needs and achievement of outcomes for all students.
- For the provincial goals, include strategies and the required measure(s) for each outcome. Required provincial goals, outcomes and performance measures are listed on page 2-6.
- Include the most recent year of charter school results for all the required measures. For achievement tests and diploma exams, include charter school and provincial cohort results and targets for each subject and grade, and for overall results (all subjects and grades combined).
- Set targets for all required Accountability Pillar measures for which there is more than one year of comparable data, as follows:
  - a target for the first year of the plan when there are two years of results
  - targets for two years when there are three years of results
  - targets for all three years of the plan when there are four or more years of results.
- Clearly identify the Accountability Pillar measures (a sub-set of the measures in the charter school plan).
- Include requirements from charter school evaluations, if applicable.

Notes:

- See Appendix C for information on target setting.
- Consistent with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, when the number of students or survey participants in a group is less than six, data must not be reported to protect individual privacy.

- **Budget highlights.** This section presents highlights from the charter board's budget for the first year of the three-year plan in a way that is easily understood, transparent and meaningful to the public. Budget

highlights must provide key financial information about the upcoming school year, focusing on anticipated material changes from the current year. This section may refer to budgeted changes in enrolment, certificated and un-certificated staff, programs, funding, revenues and expenses, annual surpluses or deficits and accumulated surpluses. This section must include:

- guiding principles the charter board uses in financial planning
- charts/tables that summarize information from the charter board's budget
- a web-link to the charter school's Budget Report Form.

REVISED

- **Highlights of facility and capital plans.** Include:
  - a brief description of major school renewal projects planned over the next three years (if applicable) and their benefit to students.
  - a web-link to more detailed information on the charter school's facility and capital plans.
- **Communication Plan.** Charter schools have an obligation to share their effective practices and innovative approaches for the benefit of Alberta's education system as a whole. To support this, charter school education plans must include a Communication Plan that outlines how the school will carry out this obligation.

  The elements of a good communication plan include:
  - objectives
  - audiences
  - key messages
  - an action plan (specific communication strategies) with timelines.

In addition:

- School councils must have the opportunity to participate in the development of the charter school's three-year education plan, including input on strategies.
- Charter school plans must describe how the school council was involved in the development of the plan.

Note:
An optional format is provided in Appendix A (pages 3-8) that includes all the required elements of the charter school's plan.

Required Goals, Outcomes and Performance Measures

Listed below are all the required goals, outcomes and performance measures (as applicable) for charter school three-year education plans for 2006/07 to 2008/09. Accountability Pillar categories are not required in charter school plans.

Categories	Charter Goals, Outcomes and Performance Measures (section 35 of the *School Act)* reflecting the charter school's purpose/mandate. • Locally determined.
Safe and Caring **Student Learning Opportunities**	**Goal One: High Quality Learning Opportunities for All** **Outcome: Schools provide a safe and caring environment for students.** • Percentages of teacher, parent and student agreement that: students are safe at school, are learning the importance of caring for others, are learning respect for others and are treated fairly in school. **Outcome: The education system meets the needs of all K-12 students, society and the economy.** • Percentages of teachers, parents and students satisfied with the opportunity for students to receive a broad program of studies, including fine arts, career, technology, and health and physical education. • Percentages of teachers, parents and students satisfied with the overall quality of basic education. • Percentages of teachers, parents and students satisfied with access and timeliness of services for students in schools (e.g. academic counselling, career counselling, library services, supports for students with special needs). (Clarified wording). **Outcome: Children at risk have their needs addressed through effective programs and supports.** • Annual dropout rate of students age 14 to 18 (for high school programs). • Percentages of teachers, parents and students who agree that services and supports for children at risk are easy to access and timely (required for K-9 charter schools and optional for high school programs). **Outcome: Students complete programs** (for high school programs). • Percentages of students who completed high school within **three** years of entering Grade 10 (note change in bold).
Student Learning Achievement, K-9 **Student Learning Achievement, 10-12** **Preparation for Life Long Learning, Employment, and Citizenship**	**Goal Two: Excellence in Student Learning Outcomes** **Outcome: Students demonstrate high standards.** • Percentages of students who achieve the acceptable standard, and the percentages who achieve the standard of excellence on Grades 3, 6 and 9 Provincial Achievement Tests (cohort results for each subject/ grade and for overall results – all subjects and grades combined). Reporting results for writers is optional. • Percentages of students who achieve the acceptable standard and percentages who achieve the standard of excellence on diploma examinations (for high school programs). **(Targets required for Social Studies 30 and 33.)** • Participation rates in diploma examination courses (for high school programs). REVISED • Percentages of Grade 12 students eligible for the Rutherford Scholarship (for high school programs). **Outcome: Students are well prepared for lifelong learning.** • High school to post-secondary transition rate within four years of entering Grade 10 (for high school programs) (Note change in bold.) • Percentages of teachers, parents and students satisfied with preparation for lifelong learning (required for K-9 charter schools and optional for high school programs). **Outcome: Students are well prepared for employment.** • Percentages of teachers and parents who agree that students are taught attitudes and behaviours that will make them successful at work when they finish school. **Outcome: Students model the characteristics of active citizenship.** • Percentages of teachers, parents and students who are satisfied that students model the characteristics of active citizenship.
Involvement **Continuous Improvement**	**Goal Three: Highly Responsive and Responsible Charter School** **Outcome: The charter school demonstrates effective working relationships with partners and stakeholders.** • Percentages of teachers and parents satisfied with parental involvement in decisions about their child's education. **Outcome: The charter school demonstrates leadership and continuous improvement.** • Percentages of teachers and parents indicating that their charter school has improved or stayed the same the last three years. • Percentages of teachers who agree that professional development opportunities made available through the charter schools are focused on school priorities, effectively address their ongoing professional development needs, and contribute significantly to their professional growth (clarified wording).

Notes:
- Measures that are not part of the Accountability Pillar are shaded and do not require targets. Survey measures typically consist of a number of questions for each respondent group.
- Consistent with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, when the number of students or survey participants in a group is less than six, data must not be reported to protect individual privacy.
- Starting May 2006, Alberta Education will provide multi-year drop-out and returning rates, high school completion rates, high school to post-secondary transition rates and diploma examination participation rates to charter schools.

Section

3

Results Report

An Overview of the Process

Preparing Results Reports

Each year, charter schools measure their performance and report on their progress toward achieving the charter and provincial goals and outcomes of their three-year education plans in their Annual Education Results Report (AERR). The performance measure results are a primary source of information for assessing and reporting on performance, and for determining where improvements are needed.

The annual results report informs stakeholders where the charter school is in relation to where it wants to be in achieving its goals and outcomes. It demonstrates that the charter board is accountable for results and for the wise use of resources to provide quality programs for students and to address areas for improvement. AERRs provide charter schools with the opportunity to summarize their accomplishments, in addition to reporting on performance.

In preparing their results reports, charter schools compile and assess information that pertains to the performance measures identified in their three-year education plans. This information comes from:

- Alberta Education (which provides results for provincially required measures on the Extranet):
  - Accountability Pillar surveys of students, parents and teachers
  - results from provincial achievement tests and diploma examinations
  - diploma examination participation rates
  - high school completion rates, dropout rates, high school to post-secondary transition rates and Rutherford Scholarship eligibility rates.

- local sources including school authority surveys[1] used to collect information for charter goal and optional local performance measures.

Reporting-Related Communications

Annual education results reports are public documents. Charter schools are required to post these reports on their websites. They are also encouraged to use tools such as newspaper inserts, brochures, charter school report cards and community meetings to make the information more broadly accessible.

Information that is summarized for public distribution must include results for all performance measures reported in the charter school's AERR.

A charter school's annual education results report must identify how the report was or will be communicated to the public.

Submitting Results Reports

Charter schools submit their results reports to Alberta Education by sending an e-mail to the zone director. The e-mail message should advise that the report has been posted to the charter school's website.

Due Dates

Charter school's annual education results reports are **due by November 30** of each year, for the previous school year. The reports must be posted on the charter school's website by this date, and the department notified of the posting by email to the zone director.

Reviewing Annual Education Results Reports

Alberta Education staff review charter school's annual education results reports to:

- enhance the department's understanding of charter school results;
- determine whether the implications of results for the next update of the charter school plan have been considered, e.g. how shortfalls in performance will addressed;

---

[1] To support school authorities in their local efforts to survey stakeholders, Alberta Education prepared a useful handbook, *How to Conduct Satisfaction Surveys: A Practical Guide to Conducting Surveys within Alberta's Education System*. The handbook can be downloaded from the department's Website: <http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/educationsystem/Satisfaction>.

- monitor compliance with provincial requirements;
- ensure consistency with the related education plan;
- identify ways Alberta Education can support charter school results reporting and improvement efforts; and
- identify implications for the department's planning and priorities.

The Components of an Annual Education Results Report for 2006/07 (due November 30, 2007)

[Components are required unless otherwise specified.]

Annual education results reports include the following components:

- a **message** from the charter board chair (optional)
- an **accountability statement**, worded as follows:
  The annual education results report for ***(name of charter school)*** for the ***(year)*** school year was prepared under the direction of the Charter Board in accordance with the responsibilities specified in the *School Act*, the *Government Accountability Act*, Alberta Education Policy 2.1.1 ("Accountability in Education: School Authority Accountability") and the provincial government's accounting policies. The Charter Board is committed to using the results in this report, to the best of our abilities, to improve the quality of education for our students. We will use the results to develop sound strategies for our three-year education plan to ensure that all our students can acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes they need to be self-reliant, responsible, caring and contributing members of society.
- information on how the report was or will be communicated to parents and the public
- highlights for the previous school year of the charter school's **accomplishments** (impact of major activities/strategies)and **results** (all required measures must be reported in the highlights.) Include web-links to the charter school's AISI annual report and class size report. Also include highlights of charter school evaluations, if applicable.
- report the charter school's **performance measures results** in relation to charter and provincial goals and outcomes (see page 2-6 for a list of required measures for provincial goals), including:

- the most recent five years of charter school results; for provincial achievement tests (cohort results for acceptable and excellence for each subject and grade, as well as overall results — all subjects and grades combined) and for diploma exams, also report provincial results for the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence.
- the 2006/07 results in relation to charter school targets for that year; for achievement tests and diploma exams also report 2006/07 provincial targets.
- clearly identify, e.g., highlight, the Accountability Pillar measures (a sub-set of the measures in the charter school plan).
- assessment of results (e.g., improved, no change, declined; met or did not meet target) and comment on results, such as contextual information or factors affecting performance.

Notes:

- Consistent with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, when the number of students or survey participants in a group is less than six, data must not be reported to protect individual privacy.
- For Accountability Pillar survey measures, results from the Accountability Pillar survey reports, rather than the charter school's own surveys, must be reported. Charter school survey results may be used to report on local measures.

- Identify **future challenges**, including areas for improvement and how the charter school will address these.
- **Summary of financial results:**
  - provide key financial information about the school year, such as significant changes over the prior year, the annual operating surplus or deficit, accumulated operating surplus, and capital reserves
  - include program expenditure information in a table or graph format for the primary audience – parents and other members of the community
  - indicate where more information on the charter school's sources of school generated funds and their uses can be obtained (e.g., link to the Audited Financial statements, contact person) and that comparative information is available in a provincial report – provide the web-link to the provincial roll up of AFS information: <http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/funding/afs/>
  - provide a web-link to the charter school's Audited Financial Statement for 2006-07.

- Capital and facilities projects: highlight for parents and the public progress on major facilities projects for the previous school year, as applicable, focusing on benefits to students, e.g., improved accommodation of students, enhanced learning opportunities.
- Communication Plan: highlight for parents and the public the results of implementing the communication plan.

Note:
A template for results reports is under development.

Appendix

A

Requirements and Sample Format for Charter School Plan

The list below and the format that starts on page 3 contain the requirements for education plans for 2006/09 – 2007/08. Charter schools may wish to use this information as a checklist, even if they choose to use a format of their own design. All elements are required, unless otherwise identified.

- **Message from the Charter Board Chair** (optional)
- **Accountability Statement. Must be phrased as follows:**
  The (charter school's name) education plan for the three years commencing September 1, (year), was prepared under the direction of the Charter Board in accordance with responsibilities specified in the *School Act*, the *Government Accountability Act*, Alberta Education Policy 2.1.1 ("Accountability in Education: School Authority Accountability") and the provincial government's accounting policies. The priorities outlined in this education plan were developed in the context of the provincial government's business and fiscal plans and Alberta Education's business plan. The Charter Board is committed to achieving the results laid out in this education plan.
- **Publication.** Charter schools must post their education plans on their Websites by May 31st (for this year, extended to June 23, 2006). Indicate how the education plan was or will be communicated to the public.
- **Foundation Statements.** Vision and mission - required, principles and beliefs - optional.
- **A Profile of the Charter school** (optional).
- **Charter and Provincial Goals, Outcomes, Strategies, Performance Measures and Targets.** See sample layout starting on page 3 of this section that shows the provincial goals, outcomes, performance

Appendix

Requirements and Sample Format for Charter School Plan

The list below and the format that starts on page 3 contain the requirements for education plans for 2005/06 – 2007/08. Charter schools may wish to use this information as a checklist, even if they choose to use a format of their own design. All elements are required, unless otherwise identified.

- **Message from the Charter Board Chair** (optional)
- **Accountability Statement. Must be phrased as follows:**
  The (charter school's name) education plan for the three years commencing September 1, (year), was prepared under the direction of the Charter Board in accordance with responsibilities specified in the *School Act*, the *Government Accountability Act*, Alberta Education Policy 2.1.1 ("Accountability in Education: School Authority Accountability") and the provincial government's accounting policies. The priorities outlined in this education plan were developed in the context of the provincial government's business and fiscal plans and Alberta Education's business plan. The Charter Board is committed to achieving the results laid out in this education plan.
- **Publication.** Charter schools must post their education plans on their Websites by May 31st (for this year, extended to June 23, 2006). Indicate how the education plan was or will be communicated to the public.
- **Foundation Statements.** Vision and mission - required, principles and beliefs - optional.
- **A Profile of the Charter school** (optional).
- **Charter and Provincial Goals, Outcomes, Strategies, Performance Measures and Targets.** See sample layout starting on page 3 of this section that shows the provincial goals, outcomes, performance

measures and targets that must be included in the education plan for 2006/07 – 2008/09. See the chart on page 2-6 for an at-a-glance list of performance measures required by Alberta Education.

Note: Consistent with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, when the number of students or survey participants in a group is less than six, data must not be reported to protect individual privacy.

- **For provincial goals and outcomes, identify appropriate local strategies.** Additional local outcomes and performance measures (optional).
- **Budget Highlights**
- **Highlights of capital and facilities plans.**
- **Communication Plan**

Note:
Charter schools that use landscape layouts for education plans that facilitate results reporting are encouraged to continue doing so.

Charter Goal
Outcome:

Performance Measures	Last Actual	Target 2006/07	Target 2007/08	Target 2008/09
	(Results below are percentages)			
Strategies				

Provincial Goal One: High Quality Learning Opportunities for All
Outcome 1.1: Schools provide a safe and caring environment for all students.

Performance Measures	Last Actual	Target 2006/07	Target 2007/08	Target 2008/09
	(Results below are percentages)			
• Teacher, parent, and student agreement that students are safe at school, learning the importance of caring for others, learning respect for others, and are treated fairly at school.				—
Strategies				

Outcome 1.2: The education system meets the needs of all K-12 students, society and the economy.

Performance Measures	Last Actual	Target 2006/07	Target 2007/08	Target 2008/09
	(Results below are percentages)			
• Teacher, parent, and student satisfaction with the opportunity for students to receive a broad program of studies, including fine arts, career, technology, and health and physical education.				—
• Teacher, parent and student satisfaction with the overall quality of basic education.				—
• Teacher, parent and student satisfaction with access and timeliness of services for students in schools.		—	—	—
Strategies				

Outcome 1.3: Children at risk have their needs addressed through effective programs and supports.

Performance Measures	Last Actual	Target 2006/07	Target 2007/08	Target 2008/09
	(Results below are percentages)			
• Annual dropout rate of high school programs (for high school programs).				
• Percentages of teachers, parents and students who agree that services and supports for children at risk are easy to access and timely (for K-9 charter schools).				—
Strategies				

Outcome 1.4 Students complete programs.

Performance Measures	Last Actual	Target 2006/07	Target 2007/08	Target 2008/09
	(Results below are percentages)			
• High school completion rate of students within three years of entering Grade 10 (for high school programs).				
Strategies				

Provincial Goal Two: Excellence in Student Learning Outcomes
Outcome 2.1: Students demonstrate high standards.

Performance Measures			Last Actual 2004/05 A | E**	Target 2006/07 A | E**	Target 2007/08 A | E**	Target 2008/09 A | E**
			(Acceptable and Excellence results below are percentages)			
• Percentage of students in Grades 3, 6 and 9 who achieved the acceptable standard and the percentages who achieved the standard of excellence on provincial achievement tests.	Grade 3:					
	Language Arts	Charter				
		Province	82 | 16	84 | 18	84 | 18	85 | 18
	Mathematics	Charter				
		Province	80 | 26	83 | 30	83 | 30	83 | 31
	Grade 6:					
	Language Arts	Charter				
		Province	77 | 15	82 | 18	82 | 18	82 | 18
	Mathematics	Charter				
		Province	78 | 18	80 | 21	80 | 21	80 | 21
	Science	Charter				
		Province	80 | 26	82 | 27	82 | 27	82 | 27
	Social Studies	Charter				
		Province	78 | 22	80 | 22	80 | 22	80 | 22
	Grade 9:					
	Language Arts	Charter				
		Province	78 | 14	80 | 16	80 | 16	80 | 16
	Mathematics	Charter				
		Province	68 | 20	70 | 21	70 | 21	70 | 21
	Science	Charter				
		Province	67 | 13	68 | 13	TBD	TBD
	Social Studies	Charter				
		Province	71 | 18	75 | 21	75 | 21	75 | 21
	Overall:					
		Charter			—	—
		Province	76.1 | 18.9	78.4 | 20.7	TBD	TBD
Strategies						

Outcome 2.1: Students demonstrate high standards. (continued)

Performance Measures			Last Actual 2004/05 A | E**	Target 2006/07 A | E**	Target 2007/08 A | E**	Target 2008/09 A | E**
			(Acceptable and Excellence results below are percentages)			
• Percentage of students who achieved the acceptable standard and the percentage who achieved the standard of excellence on diploma examinations.	English 30-1	Charter		—	—	—
		Province	89 | 18	*	*	TBD
	English 30-2	Charter		—	—	—
		Province	89 | 10	*	*	TBD
	Social Studies 30	Charter			—	—
		Province	85 | 24	86 | 24	TBD	TBD
	Social Studies 33	Charter			—	—
		Province	85 | 18	85 | 18	TBD	TBD
	Pure Math 30	Charter		—	—	—
		Province	81 | 26	*	TBD	TBD
	Applied Math 30	Charter		—	—	—
		Province	88 | 22	*	*	TBD
	Biology 30	Charter		—	—	—
		Province	82 | 27	*	*	TBD
	Chemistry 30	Charter		—	—	—
		Province	88 | 33	*	TBD	TBD
	Physics 30	Charter		—	—	—
		Province	84 | 28	*	TBD	TBD
	Science 30	Charter		—	—	—
		Province	88 | 22	*	*	*

Performance Measures	Last Actual	Target 2006/07	Target 2007/08	Target 2008/09
		(Results below are percentages)		
• Diploma examination participation rate (for high school programs).				
• Percentages of Grade 12 students eligible for the Rutherford Scholarship (for high school programs).				

Strategies

* Prior results are not comparable from year to year – target will not be set until more years of comparable data are available.
** "A" = Acceptable; "E" = Excellence – the percentages achieving the acceptable standard include the percentages achieving the standard of excellence. TBD = Target will be set when more years of data are available.

Outcome 2.2 Students are well prepared for lifelong learning.

Performance Measures	Last Actual	Target 2006/07	Target 2007/08	Target 2008/09
	(Results below are percentages)			
• High school to post-secondary transition rate within four years of entering Grade 10 (for high school programs).				
• Percentages of teachers, parents and students satisfied with preparation for lifelong learning (for K-9 schools).				—
Strategies				

Outcome 2.3 Students are well prepared for employment.

Performance Measures	Last Actual	Target 2006/07	Target 2007/08	Target 2008/09
	(Results below are percentages)			
• Teacher and parent agreement that students are taught attitudes and behaviours that will make them successful at work when they finish school.				—
Strategies				

Outcome 2.4 Students model the characteristics of active citizenship.

Performance Measures	Last Actual	Target 2006/07	Target 2007/08	Target 2008/09
	(Results below are percentages)			
• Teacher, parent and student agreement that students model the characteristics of active citizenship.				—
Strategies				

Provincial Goal Three: Highly Responsive and Responsible Charter School
Outcome 3.1 The charter school demonstrates effective working relationships with partners and stakeholders.

Performance Measures	Last Actual	Target 2006/07	Target 2007/08	Target 2008/09
	(Results below are percentages)			
• Teacher and parent satisfaction with parental involvement in decisions about their child's education.				—
Strategies				

Outcome 3.2 The charter school demonstrates leadership and continuous improvement.

Performance Measures	Last Actual	Target 2006/07	Target 2007/08	Target 2008/09
	(Results below are percentages)			
• Percentage of teachers and parents who indicate that their charter school has improved or stayed the same in the last three years.				—
• Percentages of teachers who agree that professional development opportunities made available through the charter school are focused on school priorities, effectively address their ongoing professional development needs and contribute significantly to their professional growth.		—	—	—
Strategies				

Appendix

B

Revised Reporting Requirements for November 2006 AERR

For November 2006 AERR based on jurisdiction and school plans for 2005/06-2007/08

The 2006 Annual Education Results Report includes the following components:

- A **message** from the charter board chair (optional)
- An **accountability statement**, worded as follows:
  The annual education results report for ***(name of charter school)*** the ***(year)*** school year was prepared under the direction of the Charter Board in accordance with the responsibilities specified in the *School Act*, the *Government Accountability Act*, Alberta Education Policy 2.1.1 ("Accountability in Education: School Authority Accountability") and the provincial government's accounting policies. The Charter Board is committed to using the results in this report, to the best of our abilities, to improve the quality of education for students in our charter school. We will use the results to develop sound strategies for our three-year education plan to ensure that all our students can acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes they need to be self-reliant, responsible, caring and contributing members of society.
- Information on how the report was or will be communicated to parents and the public.
- Highlights for the previous school year of the charter school's **accomplishments** (impact of major activities/strategies) and results (must include all required and charter goal performance measures). Also include a web-link to the charter school's AISI annual report and class size report. Include highlights of charter school evaluations, if applicable.

- Report the charter school's **performance measures results** in relation to their goals and outcomes (see page 2-6 for list of required measures), including:
  - the most recent five years of charter school results for all measures; for achievement tests and diploma exams also report the provincial results for the same years
  - the 2005/06 results in relation to charter school targets for that year for all measures; for provincial achievement tests also report the 2005/06 charter school result in relation to the provincial target

REVISED

  - the most recent five years of results for the new measures provided by Alberta Education as part of the Accountability Pillar: dropout rates, three-, four- and five-year high school completion rates, four- and six- year high school to post-secondary transition rates, and diploma examination participation rates (for high school programs)
  - clearly identify the Accountability Pillar measures (a sub-set of the measures in the charter school plan)
  - assessment of results (e.g., improved, no change, declined; met or did not meet target) and comments such as contextual information as factors affecting performance.

Notes:

- Consistent with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, when the number of students or survey participants in a group is less than six, data must not be reported to protect individual privacy.
- For Accountability Pillar survey measures, results from the Accountability Pillar Survey, rather than the charter school's own surveys, must be reported. Charter school survey results may be used to report on local measures.

- Identify **future challenges**, including areas for improvement and how the charter school will address these.
- **Summary of Financial results**
  - provide key financial information about the school year, such as significant changes over the prior year, the annual operating surplus or deficit, accumulated operating surplus and capital reserves
  - include program expenditure information in a table or graph format for the primary audience – parents and other members of the community

- indicate where more information on the charter school's sources of school generated funds and their uses can be obtained (e.g., link to the Audited Financial statements, contact person) and that comparative information is available in a provincial report – provide the web-link to the provincial roll up of AFS information: <http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/funding/afs/>
- provide a web-link to the charter school's Audited Financial Statement for 2005/06.

- **Capital and Facilities Projects:** highlight, for parents and the public, progress on major facilities projects for the previous school year (if applicable), focusing on benefits to students.
- **Communication Plan:** highlight for parents and the public results of implementing the communication plan.

Note: A template for reporting results is under development.

Setting Targets for Performance Measures

Targets are relevant for performance measures at all levels of Alberta's learning system, including charter school and provincial levels of performance. The information provided below relates specifically to charter school target setting.

Definition

A target is a desired level of performance to be attained by a specified time. Targets are a commitment to improvement.

Purpose

Targets support continuous improvement and are used to assess and report achievement in relation to the desired level of performance. Targets indicate the extent of improvement the organization is striving to achieve by a point in time (e.g., by a certain year), and provide a focus for efforts to achieve improvement, including resource allocation, staffing and strategy development and implementation.

Targets are required for the required measures in charter school plans, as data becomes available. Charter schools assess their performance on the required measures against targets they have set.

Principles

1. Targets for performance measures are a valuable part of planning, assessment and reporting.
2. Targets should be meaningful, achievable and challenging.
3. Targets should benefit students and help improve student learning.
4. Target setting should be an interactive process that takes a variety of qualitative and quantitative information into account. Charter school and provincial targets for measures provide a frame of reference for each charter school to use in setting school targets. Targets will vary from

charter school to charter school, taking into consideration charter school and community characteristics, past results and other information. Likewise, charter school targets reflect the charter school's context and results, as well as provincial results targets.

5. Targets should be communicated to parents and the public so that Albertans are part of the system-wide efforts to improve education for students.

Target Requirements for Required Measures

1. Targets need to be expressed quantitatively in relation to a whole (e.g., percentages, ratios).
2. Charter school targets need to be set in relation to charter school and provincial results and provincial targets for the Accountability Pillar measures.
3. Charter school targets are required for measures for which there is historical data. Specifically: one-year targets when there are two years of data, two-year targets when there are three years of data, and three-year targets when there are four or more years of data.
4. Targets need to focus on improvement to attain a high level of performance.

Guidelines for Setting Targets

1. Consider a wide variety of information in setting targets: past performance, including trends over time on the measure under consideration as well as related measures (e.g., using prior years' Grade 3 achievement test results to set Grade 6 achievement test results), student or charter school characteristics, resources, both financial and human, that can be applied to achieve improvement, etc.
2. Target setting should be consistent with data collection methods. Data reliability and variability should be considered in target setting.
3. Involve stakeholders in setting targets at each level. School councils and staff should have input in setting school-level targets.
4. When setting targets, prioritize to focus on areas needing improvement, and ensure organizational capacity and resources are in place, including budget, staff and concrete actions of benefit to student learning that will be taken to improve results and achieve the targets.

5. Set targets in relation to other targets, (i.e., measures that impact each other). For example, performance on achievement tests in Grade 3 has implications for performance in Grade 6 three years later.
6. Visual displays, such as trend-line graphs and projections, aid in illustrating results and in setting targets. Trend lines based on at least five years of historical data or rolling three-year averages smooth out year-to-year variability (particularly evident in smaller charter schools), shift the focus from smaller, year-to-year changes to providing information about the longer term direction of the data, including estimates of future results.
7. Professional judgment that takes the local context into account, as well as local and provincial results, is needed for setting targets. In other words, trend data, graphs and projections are an aid to target setting – they do not in themselves determine the targets.

Appendix

D

Planning and Accountability Terms

Accountability: An obligation to answer for assigned responsibilities, e.g., for use of funds, results achieved and for taking action to make continuous improvement and achieve desired results.

Baseline: A set of data used as a starting point to measure changes over time using the same methodology.

Continuous Improvement: Using performance results to adjust strategies and practices so that improvement in performance is achieved over time.

Goals: Goals are broad statements that look towards the long term and steer organizations in the direction of realizing their vision. Goals are typically expressed as desired conditions or aims.

Issues: An issue is a condition that may affect the organization's ability to fulfill its mandate or achieve its goals.

Mission Statement: A mission statement is a clear, concise description of a charter school's overall purpose and role. It gives direction to the programs and services that the charter school provides for its students.

Outcomes: Outcomes are measurable statements of what charter schools seek to achieve. In broad terms, they answer the question, "What will this look like when we get to where we want to be?"

Performance Measures: Performance measures provide information on important, quantifiable aspects of the education system. They enable charter schools to assess progress toward achieving goals and outcomes.

Principles and Beliefs: Principles and beliefs guide decision-making and provide a foundation for developing mission, vision and goals.

Profile: A profile is a brief description of the school charter school or school that gives context for the plan. Profiles include characteristics of communities, students, programs and location.

Strategies: Strategies are actions that school charter schools and schools take to achieve goals and desired outcomes that meet the needs of all their students. They address local circumstances, issues, trends and opportunities.

Targets: Targets show desired levels of performance to be attained by a certain time. Targets are expressed quantitatively.

Trend: A trend shows a direction of data over time, e.g., enrolment growth.

Vision: A vision describes a possible and desired future state for the organization, grounded in reality, which inspires and guides decisions and actions.

Testing Related Terms

Test Equating: Test equating is a procedure that establishes the relationship between scores from two or more tests and places those scores on a common scale so that student test results from different forms can be directly compared. This procedure is usually applied in situations where multiple test forms, similar in content but possibly different in test difficulty, are administered on different test dates. A variety of different statistical procedures can be used to equate tests scores. Equated scores from different forms can be directly compared. Equated scores typically will represent the same level of achievement, no matter which form the student wrote.

Anchor Item: Anchor items are used in the test-equating procedures currently applied by the Learner Assessment Branch. Since all students answer the same set of anchor items, it is possible to determine the relative difficulty of the different forms and adjust student scores appropriately. Sets of anchor items are chosen to represent the curriculum and the range of item difficulties as broadly as possible. In order to preserve the validity of the anchor items, they must be kept secure.

References

Source material for this guide

Alberta Education. *Funding Manual for School Authorities.* http://ednet.edc.gov.ab.ca/funding/FundingManual/

Alberta Education (2003). *K-12 Learning System Policy, Regulations and Forms Manual* (Revised, February 10, 2003). http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/educationguide/pol-plan/polregs/toc.asp

Alberta Finance (1998). *Results-Oriented Government: A Guide to Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement in the Public Sector* (September 28, 1998). http://www.finance.gov.ab.ca/ (Select "Publications and Forms", then "Performance Measurement", then "Other Publications").

Alberta Finance (Rick Goodkey and Ken Ogata) (1998). *Redefining Government Performance* (July 16, 1998). http://www.finance.gov.ab.ca/ Select "Publications and Forms", then "Performance Measurement", then "Other Publications").

Auditor General Alberta (2004). *Accountability in the Learning Sector* (January 9, 2004). http://www.oag.ab.ca (Select "The Reading Room", then the publication title).

Auditor General Alberta (1997). Government Accountability (February, 1997). http://oag.ab.ca (Select "The Reading Room", then the publication title).

Government Accountability Act, Revised Statutes of Alberta, 2000, Chapter G-7 (2003) http://www.qp.gov.ab.ca/catalogue/

School Act, Revised Statutes of Alberta, 2000, Chapter S-3 (2005). http://www.qp.gov.ab.ca/catalogue/